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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 002205

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PREL IZ NL BUN

SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/IRAQ: EU EXPLORATORY MISSION REPORT TO FOREIGN MINISTERS AT GYMNICHE

REF: A. THE HAGUE 1935

1B. THE HAGUE 2172

1C. BAGHDAD 756

Classified By: POLCOUNS ANDREW J. SCHOFER FOR REASONS 1.4(B) and (D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The EU exploratory mission to Iraq will report its findings and present a long list of "options" for supporting Iraqi reconstruction to the September 3-4 Gymnich, according to its Dutch chair. The Dutch hope that the mission's report will spur the EU to take a more active role in supporting Iraqi reconstruction, especially in the areas of "civilian crisis management," which include election support, police training, civil administration, rule of law, and human rights. EU involvement on the ground will start relatively small and build up gradually, with an emphasis on "quality" (i.e., niche value-added) over "quantity." END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) On September 2, DCM received a comprehensive readout of the EU's three-day "exploratory mission" to Iraq from Herman Schaper, Dutch MFA Deputy Political Director. Schaper, who chaired the mission in his EU presidency capacity, stressed that the mission had been "exploratory" and therefore set out "options" rather than recommendations. The mission's report, which would be circulated at the September 3-4 Gymnich informal meeting of EU foreign ministers, contained a long list of options which could serve as the basis for concrete proposals. Schaper anticipated that the September 13 GAERC formal meeting of foreign ministers would endorse the findings of the exploratory mission and hopefully authorize a second fact-finding experts' mission to Iraq to develop a plan of action. The November 5 EU Council meeting -- to which Iraqi Prime Minister Allawi has been invited -- could then serve as an action-forcer leading the EU to put the plan of action quickly into effect.

¶3. (C) Schaper noted (as have other Dutch interlocutors, per ref b) that the EU Commission and Council Secretariat had earlier been seen as reluctant to engage aggressively on Iraq, despite clear guidance that the EU intended to take a more active role in reconstruction. He left no doubt that the Dutch presidency had been the driving force behind the exploratory mission. The decision to have FM Bot accompany the mission into Iraq, and to staff it at a relatively high level, had been deliberately intended to shame the Commission and Secretariat into more active participation. Schaper expressed satisfaction that the positive experience of the mission would encourage the EU to play a more constructive role in Iraq both politically and practically. In his view, the mission succeeded both in bringing all relevant EU elements "on board" and in pushing the process of Iraqi reconstruction forward significantly. He added that the Dutch were actively pursuing several tracks with regard to Iraq, which included strengthening political contacts through high-level visits and exchanges and providing financial/economic support (including possible debt relief) in addition to supporting civilian reconstruction.

¶4. (C) The options contained in the exploratory missions report generally fell into the area of "civilian crisis management," according to Schaper, which he further divided into five sub-categories:

- Police Support (including training)
- Rule of Law
- Human Rights
- Civilian Administration
- Election Support.

In all these areas, Schaper said, the commission recommended that any EU involvement take into account the following criteria:

- Does it respond to an actual Iraqi need?
- Does it provide concrete added value (i.e., no duplication of effort)?
- Is it complementary to what others are already doing and part of a coherent program?
- Does it reflect real EU capacities (esp. since member states' participation will be voluntary)?
- Will the security situation allow it?
- Is it politically relevant/visible as an EU project?
- Is it practical in budget terms?

15. (C) Schaper stressed that several of the options listed in the mission report went beyond the strict mandate of the mission but reflected suggestions made by Iraqi and international contacts during the visits. He noted the EU was especially interested in finding "niches" where its unique capabilities could be most effectively utilized: "quality not quantity." In that context, Schaper cautioned that the EU's involvement in Iraq on the ground would probably start small and increase gradually; it would not be realistic to expect "50 to 100" EU trainers to begin work in the next few months, for example, but a few "tens" might be possible. The exploratory mission, he added, had not taken up the issue of "reflagging" existing programs (such as the training program in Jordan) so the options in the report were all new.

16. (C) According to Schaper, some of the specific options outlined in the mission report include:

- Specialized police training (forensics/crime scene investigation, border police, customs, senior-level officer capacity building);
- Human rights/rule of law training support for the Ministry of Justice (training of judges, prosecutors, lawyers);
- Assistance to the Iraqi special tribunal (including in the area of exhumation of mass graves);
- Establishment of a center for the promotion of Human Rights and Democratization;
- Election support, including the funding and training of observers (NOTE: Schaper stressed that on this issue, in particular, the European Commission would take the lead on developing proposals. End Note)

17. (C) Schaper noted that although security/military issues were not part of the exploratory mission's mandate, the mission had also discussed with U.S. interlocutors in Baghdad the possibility of helping Iraq develop effective import/export controls and assistance in demobilizing and disarming militias. He stressed that the mission had gone to Baghdad without a particular agenda, but had solicited input from all sources. In that context, Schaper said he was particularly appreciative of the thoughtful proposals the mission had received from U.S. mission personnel in Baghdad. Schaper also had an opportunity to discuss the EU mission's approach with Dutch Air Force Major General Carel Hilderink, who chaired the recent NATO Training Implementation Mission in Iraq (ref c) and stressed that every effort would be made to ensure that the two missions reports were complementary rather than duplicative.

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